Tangerine by Edward Bloor

Novel Study

Tangerine is a coming of age themed fiction novel by Edward Bloor in 1997. The book is written in a journal format and has three parts to it. The main character, fourteen-year-old Paul Fisher, is the protagonist and the book is written from his perspective. Some themes that are addressed throughout the book include race relations, sibling rivalry, competitive sports, and environmental concerns. I enjoyed this book as an eighth grader and I enjoyed it even more when I read it this time around. The author does a great job of making the reader feel the emotions of each character, be it the angry older brother, the mean bully in the school, or the poor, pitiful, yet overcoming main character.

The story begins with the Fisher family moving to a new state, Florida. Paul, the younger of two boys is not exactly excited about the move and really just wants to play soccer, however his family, in his opinion, only cares about the “Eric Fisher Football Dream.” (Eric is his older brother and the star kicker.) When they make it to Florida, Paul immediately feels ignored and is nervous about going to school because he has to wear special glasses, more like goggles, due to the fact that he is legally blind. The crazy thing is, he just can’t remember what caused his blindness. All he knew was it hasn’t always been that way.

After a tragic accident at the first middle school Paul had attended, he got to transfer to Tangerine Middle school and he just knew that this time around it would be different. He had been kicked off the soccer team at the first one because he had an IEP for his blindness and they said he was too much of a liability, but his mother conveniently leaves that form out when taking his file to the new school. He has a second chance to play and be the first string goalie he had always wanted to be. There are some twists and turns and at first he doesn’t even get to play, but he is happy with his new school and can’t imagine it any other way.

Throughout the book, Paul experiences flashbacks occasionally and he doesn’t seem to know what they are all about; a grey wall, white spray paint, his mom and dad asking if he can see them. In the end he finally remembers what had happened, why he was blind. The book tells it the best, so I will let everyone read it for themselves.

Scaffolded Reading Experience (SRE)

**DAY 1:**

**PRE-READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Building Background Knowledge:* Provide brief information on Edward Bloor and the   
   setting of the story.
2. *Motivating:* Have the students write down and discuss the following question. Think about a time when you witnessed someone doing something that was wrong (against the rules, hurtful to someone else, etc.), what was, what did you do at the time, what, if anything, could you have done differently? Explain the implications this has to the novel and the theme of sibling rivalry and civic duty.

**DURING READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Reading to students:* Read the introduction aloud to the class. Discuss what third person is and how a journal works. Let the students look ahead to see the first few entries by Paul. Explain to them that for the next week they are to write at least one journal entry a day highlighting the significant events that occurred.
2. *Silent reading:* Read Part 1 for homework

**DAY 2:**

**POST-READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Building connections:* Give the students the option to choose a subject in Part 1 to research in the computer lab that day. For example: IEP, weather patterns in Florida, osprey, etc. Approve their selection and have each student give a short presentation at the end of their research. (This could be done in pairs or groups as well.)
2. *Remind students to continue journaling. Check these to make sure they are on track. Homework is to finish Part 1 if they hadn’t yet.*

**DAY 3:**

**DURING READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Reading to students:* Read as much of Part 2 to students in class as you can.

**POST-READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Questioning:* As you read have the students write down questions they may have, predictions they could make, or anything they would like to discuss further or comment on.
2. *Discussion:* Occasionally pause in your reading time and ask for the things that have been written down and have the students lead discussions and answer one another’s questions, interjecting when needed.
3. *Homework is to continue journaling and continue reading Part 2.*

**DAY 3:**

**DURING READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Silent Reading:* Give students time in class to continue reading. The goal is to complete Part 2 today. If it isn’t completed in class, then they should finish it at home.

**DAY 4:**

**POST-READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Artistic, Graphic and Nonverbal:* Art project. Tell the students to pick a scene out of the book so far that they think is significant and illustrate however they deem necessary. Include a direct quote from the text that is relevant to the event you are depicting.
2. *Reading to students:* If time permits, begin reading Part 3 to the class. *Homework is to continue reading this part. There will be time in class the next day to continue the reading. Don’t forget to be keeping the journals!!!*

**DAY 5:**

**DURING READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Silent reading:* Continue reading in class. The book is to be completed before the next class time. (Preferably this is a Friday to allow students who are behind time to catch up.) *Journal over the weekend. They are to be completed with at least 7 entries next class.*

**DAY 6:**

**POST-READING ACTIVITIES:**

1. *Writing:* Have the quote: “*But I can see. I can see everything. I can see things that Mom and Dad can’t. Or won’t.”* written on the board. Ask the students why this is true, what feelings it may have provoked, and to use evidence from the text to support their answers.
2. *Small-group discussions:* Group the students and assign them a character in the book to analyze. Discuss if the character changes or not (static or dynamic), the different feelings they felt and experienced throughout the novel, and if they became a different person in the end. As a group, make a list of these things with page numbers to refer to, and then share with the whole class.
3. *Journals are due!* Discuss with the students what it was like journaling their lives and what they may have learned from it. Did they like it, hate it? Would they continue to journal? What did they learn about themselves?